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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
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**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY
ORGANIZATION (NATO)
PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY**

January 25, 2011

The Honorable Julius Genachowski, Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

MB-Satellite 0113
Received & Inspected

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FCC Mail Room

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

As you may know, I have been working in Congress to bring greater choice to television viewers in so-called "orphan counties" with no access to in-state broadcasting. Two years ago, I introduced the Local Television Freedom Act of 2009, which ultimately led to the study you are now conducting regarding orphan counties. I am writing to you today to reemphasize how important this issue is to my district and the people I represent.

My constituents are Arkansans and are typically most interested in news, weather, and sports from Little Rock. However, for reasons I have never fully understood, seven counties in my district are located in the Shreveport, Louisiana DMA and two counties are located in the Monroe, Louisiana DMA.

This means that thousands of my constituents receive Louisiana news, weather, and sports. It means that, on Fall Saturdays, they have to watch LSU Tigers football rather than Arkansas Razorbacks football.

When I return to my district each week, I hear about a variety of issues, but I can assure you that no issue resonates in my district more than the question of why they are forced to watch Louisiana television. Unfortunately, I have never been able to give them a good answer.

As you prepare your report, I ask you to keep my constituents in mind. I hope to find in your report specific recommendations for Congress that we can use to create legislation increasing the number of local choices available to television viewers in orphan counties.

Sincerely,

Mike Ross

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

February 28, 2011

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Mike Ross
U.S. House of Representatives
2436 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Ross:

Thank you for your comments in the Commission's proceedings to implement the Satellite Television Extension and Localism Act of 2010 (STELA). I share your concern that some satellite television consumers in Arkansas and other states may not have access to programming that originates from television stations licensed to communities in their states.

Federal law – even following passage of STELA – requires that satellite television carriers use the Designated Market Area (DMA) as defined by the Nielsen Company to determine which television stations to include in their local programming packages. Recognizing that this requirement may limit the availability of in-state programming to some consumers, however, STELA directs the Commission to prepare a report that, among other things, examines whether there are alternatives to use of Nielsen DMAs. The Commission issued a *Public Notice* on November 23, 2010, seeking public input for this report. The Commission is required to submit its findings to Congress in August 2011. I am enclosing a copy of the *Public Notice* for your information, and will ensure that your letter is included in the record of this proceeding.

Also on November 23, the Commission adopted a *Report and Order* implementing provisions of STELA designed to make the carriage of “significantly viewed” out-of-market stations easier for satellite television providers. I am hopeful that in the wake of this *Order*, satellite carriers will expand the availability of significantly viewed television signals to consumers. In Arkansas, station KATV-DT (ABC), Little Rock, is deemed to be significantly viewed and eligible to be provided to satellite consumers in Union county.

I appreciate your interest in this important matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I may be of further assistance.

Sincerely,



Julius Genachowski

Enclosure